DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 317 244 JC 900 195

AUTHOR	Oromaner, Mark; Scott, Joseph F.
TITLE	Cyclical Program Review Process at HCCC: An Executive Summary, 1986.
INSTITUTION	Hudson County Community Coll., Jersey City, NJ.
PUB DATE	86
NOTE	39p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*College Planning; Community Colleges; Evaluation Criteria; *Evaluation Methods; Facility Improvement; Facility Planning; Needs Assessment; *Program Evaluation; *Self Evaluation (Groups); Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

In 1982, a program/service review approach was adopted by Hudson County Community College as an alternative to conventional accreditation. The 5-year program/review cycle, conducted from 1982 to 1986, involved spacing evaluation and review over an extended time period and integrating program/service reviews into the school's planning process. Each academic program and service area was placed on an evaluation/self-study schedule. Self-study groups, composed of five or six individuals closely associated with the program or area, identified goals, performance standards, and concerns, and analyzed the program/area success. Recommendations and responses were made at the end of the evaluation period. Advantages to the program/service review approach included the following: (1) each academic program and service receives full attention and is considered at least once in the 5-year cycle; (2) virtually every faculty and staff member plays an active role in the development of the self-study document; (3) self-study groups become more aware of and renew their commitment toward program objectives; (4) the number of programs and units examined in one year is more manageable in terms of scheduling budgetary provisions; and (5) since an accreditation recommendation is not made as a result of each review, both internal and external examiners can be more objective and critical. Disadvantages were the costliness and the time required for the program/service review. Actions taken in response to self-study recommendations are enumerated. Appendixes include a timetable and guidelines for self-study. (WJT)

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HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS AT HCCC: AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, 1986

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and
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JC 900 195

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
BACKGROUND	1
THE PLANNING PROCESS	2
REVIEW SCHEDULE AND SELF-STUDY GROUPS	5
THE SELF-STUDY	6
INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO SELF-STUDY GROUPS	8
ELEMENTS IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROCESS	19
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF PROGRAM/SERVICE REVIEW	23
CONCLUSIONS	26

APPENDIXES

A - ANNUAL SELF-STUDY TIMETABLE

B - GUIDELINES FOR SELF-STUDY

BACKGROUND

These pages represent a critical analysis of the 1982/83 - 1985/86 Program/Service Review cycle conducted at Hudson County Community College, and a summary statement concluding the process. At Hudson, the review cycle is intended to serve as an alternative to the conventional mode of accreditation.

Hudson County Community College was founded in 1974 under the provisions of the New Jersey Administrative Code permitting counties without a community college to establish a commission and provide two-year postsecondary education through contracts with accredited institutions of higher education. The first few years of the college's existence were marked with problems which necessitated reorganization in 1977. The principal focus of change in the reorganization was in the nature of the contract itself, changing from a full service contract to a discrete one which sought to purchase only instruction and facility usage from its cooperating colleges. An intended consequence of this shift in emphasis was to guarantee complete control of academic affairs and prepare the way for Middle States accreditation.

The college received full accreditation in 1981, describing itself in the self-study as a contract college; it had contractual agreements for faculty and facilities with three four-year institutions. At the same time, however, the college directly sponsored extensions of its day programs at evening centers and conducted a complete foundations program with its own full-time faculty. Because the term Commission in the college name did not properly describe the completeness of the institution, the Middle States team recommended its elimination. This was officially accomplished in 1981.

The 1981 visitation by Middle States was preceded by a series of licensure visits conducted by the State Department of Higher Education with Middle States observers joining the evaluation teams. Consequently, the college has been exposed to external scrutiny from its reorganization in 1977. Out of this situation grew the institutional conviction that constant self evaluation would make the college stronger and more effective in every way, and a principle of vigilance was informally adopted.

When the college learned of the Program/Service Review approach as an experimental option to conventional accreditation, it immediately requested permission to enter a review cycle. The prospect of spacing evaluation and review over an extended time period made great sense, especially for a new institution, and the opportunity to integrate program/service reviews into the planning process in a specific way was a convincing argument in favor of entering Program/Service Review. The college was approved to begin a cycle in 1982/83.*

THE PLANNING PROCESS

At the same time the decision was made to enter Program/Service Review, Hudson County Community College initiated a new comprehensive planning process which was, in effect, designed to accommodate the process. The new system necessitated the creation of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, each word in the title of that office identifying a different component or aspect of what we consider to be one process. The system also

*HCCC completed all program/service reviews in a four-year rather than a five-year period. This schedule reflects the fact that the college adopted this process in 1982, one year after receiving accreditation from Middle States (1981). The four-year timetable permitted the college to undergo its accreditation visit (Summary Assessment) on schedule in the spring of 1986.

created a new, broad-based Planning Commission comprised of representatives from the Board of Trustees, administration, middle management, faculty, students, secretarial, maintenance and security. This 17 member panel, chaired by the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation, receives reports and synthesized data produced by the process and makes recommendations to the President. The President, in turn, responds to the Commission before conveying recommendations to the Board of Trustees.

Under the prior system of planning, the Planning and Research Committee was the principal body involved in the process. This body, comprised of cabinet members, is retained in the new process and serves as an intermediary between self-study groups, external evaluators, and the Planning Commission. It is now called the Planning and Evaluation Committee.

A self-study conducted by each academic program and service unit is the keystone of the new process. The success and strength of the entire system is dependent upon the honesty and validity of the self-study, and the college does all that it can to support and foster genuine efforts.

The structure of HCCC's comprehensive planning, research and evaluation process appears on the next page. The focus of this Executive Summary is on the role of the self-study groups and the Middle States Evaluation Teams in this comprehensive process.

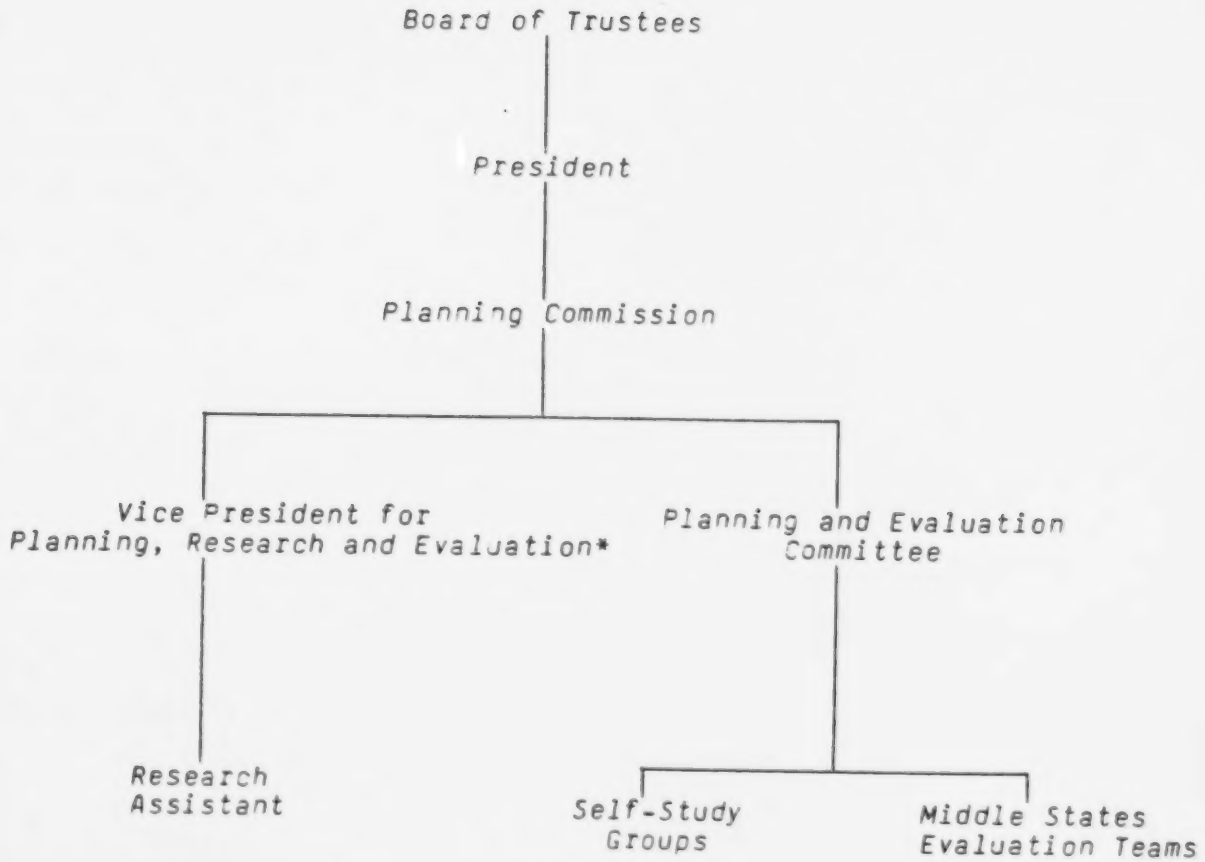

DIAGRAM 1 - Comprehensive Planning, Research And Evaluation Process

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* The Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation chairs the Planning and Evaluation Committee and the Planning Commission.

REVIEW SCHEDULE AND SELF-STUDY GROUPS

At the beginning of the review cycle, the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation places each academic program and service area on an evaluation schedule. Each program/service is scheduled for self-study/evaluation once during the cycle. The final version of this schedule is approved by the members of the President's Cabinet.

Placement within the schedule is not random. There is an attempt to provide a balance each year between programs and services; closely related programs, e.g., medical assisting and medical record technology, electronics technology and chemical laboratory technology, were scheduled for the same year; broad-based and entry-level programs were scheduled during the first year, e.g., admissions and testing, basic skills, bilingual education.

At the beginning of the summer preceding the March visit by the Middle States Evaluation Team, the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation, in association with other appropriate cabinet members, identifies the chair for each self-study group.* In almost all cases, the chair is the divisional chair, program coordinator, area coordinator, department director, etc. The members of the group are then identified by the chair and the Vice President. The typical group is comprised of 5-6 individuals closely associated with the program/area. Faculty members from cooperating colleges serve on each academic self-study group. In addition, the Research Assistant, Office of Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation works with each group. Members of the self-study groups are reminded that the self-study process is to be a collaborative effort among self-study group members.

*A timetable for a representative year appears as Appendix A.

THE SELF-STUDY

Whereas the college does not officially endorse any particular model or approach to self-study, it does provide self-study groups with guidelines which may be used in the conduct of their studies. The guidelines are a cross-section of several possible ways of evaluating programs and services, and allows for individual preferences to be emphasized.*

In particular, the guidelines must be adapted to the unique aspects of each of the service areas. The Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation assists the self-study committee chairs in the adaptation of the guidelines.

Some self-study groups elect to identify goals, objectives, and standards of performance and determine in the course of their analysis the degree of congruency or discrepancy from the desired outcomes and the conclusion of their study. The objectives perceived to be indicative of success are those subscribed to by the individuals involved in self-study and not necessarily identical to institutional goals posted in official literature. Although emphasis is definitely placed on a perceived, and perhaps even measured level of goal attainment, attention is paid to the reasons for success or failure and the performance of those involved in the process. A latent consequence of a self-study oriented to goal attainment is a clarification in the minds of the participants as to both the objectives of the program and the variables contributing to success or failure.

Some self-study groups subordinate the notion of goal attainment in favor of identifying issues and concerns of the participants in an inductive way. Each group involved in the

*A copy of the guidelines and cover letter appears as Appendix B.

process: faculty, students, administrators, graduates, is surveyed, and generalizations relating to major concerns are drawn in a way that presumes that if the perceived needs of the various participants are responded to in a positive way, the program or service will be more effective. Those who emphasize the issue centered inductive approach tend to produce a more critical self-study and are better positioned to conceptualize problems.

Those programs and service units perceiving potential or real difficulties in effectiveness such as low enrollments or reduction in resources, may prescind from both goal attainment and identification of concerns as the central theme of the study in favor of collecting and presenting data to support and influence a decision. The decision may have bearing on resource allocation to strengthen and restructure a program or service or conversely may argue to the discontinuance of a program or service. Some aspects of this approach are found in those studies which suggest either a change in the goals to be achieved or the means employed to acquire them.

A less desirable aspect of self-studies, and one which is present to some degree in many may be referred to, for want of a better term, as reputational. Some self-study groups perceive their programs to be operating effectively and successfully and base their judgements on expressed observations of advisory committees and external professional observers. Since the use of external evaluators is recognized to be a legitimate means of assessment, the use of a reputational approach cannot be ignored or overlooked. It does, however, tend to diminish the openess and honesty of the study participants and engenders a defensive attitude.

Although it is possible to identify theoretical constructs and models which may be used in self-evaluation, Hudson does not advise or recommend the use of any specific approach for its study groups. The college is convinced, however, that self- study groups must be provided with guidelines which suggest elements of all possible approaches and stresses for the participants freedom of choice and direction. In reality, when a theoretical model is not imposed, the final products of self-study represent a commingling or cross-section of various possible alternatives.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO SELF-STUDY GROUPS

One of the key elements in the program/service review approach to accreditation is the responsiveness of the institution to self-study groups. When a review cycle is initiated at an institution, one has to anticipate a degree of skepticism concerning the merit of the system. The positive manner in which the first self-studies are received and responded to will tend to diminish the level of skepticism and develop confidence in the value of the self-study process. At Hudson, each self-study group is assembled shortly after the annual visit of an External Evaluation Team, and the entire self-study document is reviewed directly by the President and the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation with the members of the self-study group. Each suggested recommendation is taken separately and, if the recommendation is accepted for positive response, it is put on schedule for implementation and thus becomes part of the official planning process.

A review of the institutional responses to the recommendations of self-study groups and External Evaluation Teams, and the subsequent actions taken as a result of the recommendations comprise an impressive list.

A summary of these actions is presented here for emphasis:

YEAR	PROGRAM/SERVICE	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS	
1982-83	Admissions and Testing	7	
	Basic Skills	7	
	Bilingual Education	9	
	Educational Opportunity Fund	4	
	Human Services	5	
			(32)
1983-84	Chemical Laboratory Technology	7	
	Electronics Engineering Technology	7	
	Data Processing	11	
	Counseling Services	6	
	Registrar's Office	5	
			(36)
1984-85	Accounting	8	
	Child Care	11	
	Medical Assisting	8	
	Medical Record Technology	4	
	Facilities - Library System, Learning Center, Student Center	3	
	Facilities - Facilities and Services	6	
			(40)
1985-86*	Criminal Justice and Public Administration	6	
	Secretarial Studies	14	
	Management	11	
	Culinary Arts Institute	18	
	Business Office	6	
	Financial Aid Office	7	
			(62)
Total recommendations		170	

A gratifying observation is that in almost every case, the External Examiner either explicitly or implicitly indicated that his/her recommendations parallel those made by the internal self-study group.

*The 1985-86 Evaluation Team visited the college during the period March 2-4, 1986, and the team's report was received March 27. Therefore, responses to the recommendations for these programs/services do not appear below.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESPONSES

1982-83

Admissions and Testing

1. Full-time Recruiter.

Institutional Response - Two full-time recruiters were added to the admissions staff.

2. Office Expansion and Improvements.

Institutional Response - Within months of the recommendation, the admissions office was expanded doubling the space and providing isolated areas for private and confidential work.

3. Need for Proctors to Assist in Testing.

Institutional Response - Proctors have been made available whenever necessary.

4. Greater Recruitment Effort.

Institutional Response - A comprehensive recruitment committee was named and all of its recommendations (Integrated Recruitment Plan) were implemented.

5. A New Computer Terminal.

Institutional Response - The college invested in a new computer with remotes for the admissions office and special software to accommodate admissions needs.

Basic Skills

1. Request to Change Basic Skills Course Offerings.

Institutional Response - The format for basic skills offerings has been completely revamped as recommended by the self-study committee.

2. Access to Library and Library Holdings.

Institutional Response - The college created its own circulation library and will acquire 10,000 to 20,000 volumes by the end of fiscal 1987.

3. Student/Counselor Ratios.

Institutional Response - The college has reduced the student/counselor ratio for foundations students through the addition of new staff.

Bilingual Education

1. Request for Research into Effectiveness of Bilingual Program.

Institutional Response - During the 1986/87 academic year, the Office of Research, Planning and Evaluation will design and conduct a bilingual effectiveness study. This will be modeled, with appropriate modifications, on the guidelines for the annual remedial program effectiveness study designed by the Department of Higher Education.

2. Request for ESL Coordinator.

Institutional Response - The college has hired an ESL Director and four full-time faculty, two of whom serve as ESL Coordinators. The college has also hired two additional full-time faculty for the bilingual division.

3. Request for Increased Student Activities for Bilingual Division Students.

Institutional Response - The Vice President for Student Development has devised and implemented a plan to more adequately serve bilingual division students.

4. Request for Additional Counseling.

Institutional Response - The Vice President for Student Development has increased the counseling services to the bilingual division as part of his comprehensive plan to meet the diverse counseling needs of students.

Educational Opportunity Fund

1. A Request to Examine Hiring Practices.

Institutional Response - The college evaluated hiring practices and concluded that the turnover in EOF staff is related to the terms of employment and consequently made the appropriate adjustments as part of its review of the counseling services in general.

2. Community Advisory Board.

Institutional Response - The Community Advisory Board of EOF has been revitalized, meets regularly, and functions in a satisfactory manner.

3. Peer Counselors.

Institutional Response - The Vice President for Student Development has implemented a plan which utilizes peers to assist in the counseling and advisement effort of the college.

Human Services

1. Integration of Program Across Various Locations.

Institutional Response - The college has appointed program coordinators for each separate human services division program in order to guarantee proper integration between day and night classes and human services courses at different locations.

2. Academic Oversight of Field Placement.

Institutional Response - The college has assumed more direct involvement in the oversight of field placement than it has in the past. This is done by partially removing field placement assignments from contractual arrangement and employing supervisors directly.

1983-84

Chemical and Electronics Technologies

1. Consider Moving Away From the Contract Mode.

Institutional Response - The college has ceased to contract for its science and technology programs and now offers the entire division under its own auspices.

2. Science and Technology Safety Conditions.

Institutional Response - All aspects of the Science and Technology Center have been inspected for safety hazards and all the recommendations of the inspectors from both the state facilities division and the local fire department have been implemented.

3. Provision Should be Made for Wheelchairs.

Institutional Response - The college has installed wheelchair lifts from the basement to the first floor with exit ramps to the parking lot. We therefore have complete access for wheelchair students.

4. Mini-Library for Chemistry.

Institutional Response - The college has created a mini-library for the science and technology division which has subsequently been superceded by a central circulation library for the college. Appropriate volumes are still maintained in the science and technology division.

5. Job Placement and Follow-Up of Graduates.

Institutional Response - The college has created and staffed the Office of Career Planning and Placement. The Office of the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation will continue to conduct an annual survey of the members of the most recent graduating class. During the next five-year period all graduates of the college will be surveyed. This will provide long-term postgraduation data.

Data Processing

1. Computer Operations Workshop Course Does Not Provide Enough Hands-On Experience.

Institutional Response - The Computer Operations Workshop course has been redesigned and is a completely hands-on course.

2. Students Do Not Seem to Follow a College Sequence As It Appears in the Catalog.

Institutional Response - The college has examined scheduling patterns to provide specialization courses at appropriate times.

3. Insufficient Personnel in Counseling.

Institutional Response - As a result of a survey of counseling needs conducted by the Vice President for Student Development, a special counselor was assigned to deal with data processing students exclusively.

Counseling Services

1. Clarification and Enhancement of the Counselor Role Would Do Much to the College Recognition of the Worth of the Counseling Program.

Institutional Response - After comprehensive review of counselor roles and compensation schedules of other community colleges in the area, the college made the following changes in the counselors' work situation.

All counselors, except those in the EOF and Special Services Programs, were issued a 10 month contract instead of the previous 12 month contract. Those in EOF and Special Services were additionally compensated for the extra two month period.

Counselors were placed on pay parity with four levels of promotion corresponding to the academic ranks and compensation schedules. Criteria for movement from one rank to another were established and promulgated. Each counselor received a salary increase of $1,000 to his/her base pay. When the salary increase is combined with the reduction of the length of the annual contract, the compensation increase for one year is in excess of 25%. All of this was accomplished in order to solve the problem of turnover among counselors, to make the position at Hudson attractive and competitive, and to increase opportunities for an increase in the professionalization of the role at HCCC.

2. Measurable Job Objectives for Counseling Positions.

Institutional Response - As part of the comprehensive plan to restructure the role of counselor, the Vice President for Student Development implemented a series of job descriptions with performance objectives.

3. Career Planning and Placement Office.

Institutional Response - The college has created the Office of Career Planning and Placement and has hired a job developer.

4. Representative Group to Examine Student Expectations.

Institutional Response - As a result of the work of the recruitment committee and a special committee to examine attrition and retention, a special series of recommendations which emanated from both groups were put into effect. All of the requests made by the groups were granted. These include a video tape recruitment tool, special bulletins, outdoor advertisements, radio

and television spots and a faculty/administrative task force to make recruitment visitations to community groups and schools.

Registrar

1. Need for Additional Staff.

Institutional Response - Immediately after the self-study process, the college added an Assistant Registrar/Scheduling Officer to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar was informed that he could have an additional Assistant Registrar whenever he feels the need. He indicated he will request additional assistance as soon as he is ready.

2. Computer Software System to Be Updated.

Institutional Response - The college has acquired a VAX 750 from DEC and Information Associates Software (Rochester, New York). In our judgement, Information Associates represents the best available software for educational information systems that is available.

1984-85

Accounting

1. In Order to be Competitive, Accounting Graduates Should Be Able to Incorporate Computer Applications into Accounting.

Institutional Response - The college has implemented computer applications in Accounting I and Accounting II courses and additional courses will have computer applications in the future. In order to accommodate computer application into accounting courses, the college had to acquire additional micro computers. The college now has an excess of 200 micro computers and has the capability to deal with computer integration in many areas other than accounting. The college has scheduled the acquisition

of additional computers for fiscal year 1987.

2. Expand Advisory Committee.

Institutional Response - The college has revitalized the advisory committee for the accounting program and expanded its membership.

3. Classrooms Should be Improved for Accounting Classes by Improving Chalkboards and Acquiring Larger Desks More Conducive to Teaching Accounting.

Institutional Response - The college has acquired new chalkboards in classrooms where needed. Also, accounting classrooms have been equipped with larger desks which allow for working with spread sheets.

4. The Creation of College Library.

Institutional Response - The college created the library in 1985 and has appropriated resources for the acquisition of approximately 20,000 books.

Child Care

1. Low Enrollment in Child Care Program.

Institutional Response - Before making a decision to terminate the child care program, special recruitment efforts have been utilized, especially those directed at in-service people in the community. As a result of these special efforts we have realized some increase in enrollment in child care and anticipate a vital program.

2. Program Coordinators Need Increased Time to Work on Recruitment Efforts and the Development of Closer Ties with Community Agencies.

Institutional Response - The program coordinator for the child care program was given increased release time to work on recruitment, community affairs, and coordination of evening programs.

Facilities

1. Recommend the College Actively Plan for a Central Library/ Learning Resource Center.

Institutional Response - The college has acquired a larger site to house its Library/Learning Center. The Learning Center is equipped with 50 micro computers for use in computer assisted instruction. The Library will house approximately 20,000 volumes in its first two years and has a special computerized catalog and a retrieval system, a video tape library, and additional space for study. The college hired its first full-time librarian in 1985.

2. The College Should Seek a Core Facility Centrally Located to its Major Sites in the Journal Square Area.

Institutional Response - The college has identified a site which is intended to serve as the central location for its urban campus. The core facility is strategically located across the street from the college executive office.

3. The College Should Attempt to Acquire a Facility to Accommodate Student Activities.

Institutional Response - The college has acquired a centrally located and adequate facility on a lease basis. The facility has classrooms, lounges, gymnasium/auditorium and will adequately meet the needs for student activities.

4. The College is in Need of Additional Space for Storage.

Institutional Response - The college has cleared several rooms in the basement of one of its facilities to serve as a central storage location. This space will be utilized for distribution of materials and supplies to other college locations.

5. The College Should Consider a New Site For the Excellent Bilingual Center Which Does Not Present the Same Discouraging "Mountain Climb" as the Current Facility.

Institutional Response - A new and expanded Bilingual Center was established during the summer of 1985.

The actions listed above, taken in response to internal self-study and external examination, represent only a partial listing of the total direct institutional responses to this program/service cycle. It is safe to say that whatever doubts and fears that were present at the beginning of the process were quickly allayed, and increased confidence and enthusiasm for the process became apparent. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of swift, honest and direct response to self-study groups for the success of Program/Service Review.

Not every recommendation or weakness or concern which emanates from a self-study can be addressed immediately. But in every self-study, in Hudson's experience, there are some recommendations which can be implemented very quickly, and others which can be put on schedule for a subsequent budget cycle or planned for implementation on an agreed upon date. For those recommendations which are not accepted or cannot be adequately addressed, there is the opportunity to discuss them in an open and honest manner. In Hudson's experience, the members of each group left the review meeting satisfied that the effort expended in self-study/ evaluation was well worth it, that they had the opportunity to be looked at in depth, and that somethings were going to change because of it.

ELEMENTS IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE PROCESS

Since at least part of what is being done here is experimental in nature, it is appropriate to discuss those aspects of a Review Cycle considered to be essential to the success or failure of the process.

Two very important elements related to successful review have already been discussed in some detail. They are the

presentation of guidelines for self-study groups and the quick, individual, and positive response to self-study groups. There are others of equal importance.

The following factors affect the quality of Program/ Service Review:

1.) In order to provide a frame of reference for the conduct of self-study, the participants should have a set of guidelines which may be used to direct the course of study. The charge to the self-study group should include the information that the guidelines are merely suggestions for possible avenues to follow and should not be interpreted as an intrusion on the free choice of methodology or content. The guidelines should not emphasize or stress any particular approach, but rather attempt to exhaust the possibilities. However, to the extent possible, the format of the self-study document should parallel the guidelines. The uniformity of format aids readers of the document, e.g., Planning and Evaluation Committee and External Evaluators.

2.) In order to allay the fears of self-study participants and to put aside suspicions about administrative motivation and intent, it is essential to respond to self-study groups as quickly and positively as possible and in a direct and personal way. Ideally each group should see the president and top administrators as part of the same self-evaluation.

3.) The individual in charge of the process at the institution, in Hudson's case the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation, is extremely important to the success of the process. In his hands is the responsibility for the coordination of all the separate self-studies each year and the continuity of studies from year to year. In order to accomplish the task successfully, the

individual should be a high ranking officer of the college, have an intimate knowledge of the institution, and be capable of relating in an objective and believable way to all members of the college community. In Hudson's view the process is stronger if evaluation, planning and research are combined in one office and one individual.

In addition, the institution must be willing and able to provide a research person who can assist each self-study committee in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. At Hudson, the Research Assistant to the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation plays this role. She not only provides data collected routinely on a collegewide basis, e.g., graduate follow-up, but also assists in the construction of questionnaires designed specifically for each self-study.

4.) Loss of the individual directing the process before the cycle is complete could have a damaging effect on the entire cycle of reviews. In order to minimize the negative effects of this possibility, Hudson maintains the Planning and Evaluation Committee not only as an integral part of comprehensive planning, but also as a safety valve, the place where all that is happening in program/service review is shared with the other principal officers of the college. This systematic back-up is considered to be an important element of the process.

5.) Each self-study document is a discrete entity dealing with specific subject matter. One unifying thread tying the various units together is the Background Document. The document, revised annually, orients the members of the Middle States Evaluation Team to the context in which particular programs or service areas

function. The 40 page document comprises four chapters: The College and the Community; Philosophy, Mission, and Goals; Organization and Administration; and Students and Programs. Although we suggest that the Background Document makes a contribution to the process in general, the specifics of Hudson, e.g., contract model, make this document a necessity. The document is prepared by the Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation.

6.) The role of the Middle States Chief Program Evaluator is extremely important to the process. The individual chosen to lead evaluation teams through an entire cycle must be an experienced evaluation chair who brings discipline, objectivity, and understanding to the task. He/she must be able to deal with the full range of institutional activities and perhaps is best prepared if his/her background combines academic and administrative experience.

To the team chair falls the responsibility of bringing continuity to the self-study teams from year to year. Loss of the team chair would have a very serious impact on the review cycle and back-up alternatives are limited. One possibility is to assign a potential substitute to the regular team, and thus have an experienced chair with at least one previous visit to the institution ready as a replacement.

We have found it beneficial to have the team chair visit the college early in the fall semester and to speak with members of all self-study groups.

7.) The attitude of the president of the institution is important to the success of the process. It is not likely that a president

would opt for Program/Service Review unless he/she were convinced that the process was superior to the conventional accreditation approach and was prepared to engage in genuine internal and external in depth evaluation. Nevertheless, the president must take the lead in convincing the college community of the value of the process and in transmitting the appropriate spirit of critical self-study.

8.) Preparation of external evaluators. The quality of the external evaluators who participated in the annual visits to the college plays a role in the success of the Program/Service Review process. We have found the 19 evaluators who visited HCCC during the past four years to be professional in attitude and behavior, and, in the majority of cases, to provide recommendations relevant to the program or unit under review.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF PROGRAM/SERVICE REVIEW

Advantages

1.) One of the primary advantages of the program/service review approach is the guarantee that each academic program and service unit receives full attention and consideration at least once in the five-year cycle. In the conventional, synchronic evaluation process many academic programs and service units are not visited by the team, and the groups feel they have been ignored. The fact of the matter is that a conventional evaluation team cannot visit with all academic programs and service units, much less examine them in depth.

2.) In program/service review virtually every member of the faculty and staff plays an active role in the development of the self-study document. Each member participates more fully in the

process, realizing that a peer-specialist in his/her area will visit the college.

3.) From the point of view of administration, it is far better to examine a manageable number of programs and units thoroughly in the course of a given year and have the opportunity to learn of needs and concerns in a way that permits ample time to respond to them and to schedule the appropriate budgetary provisions.

4.) The individual program/service review brings to the self-study group an increased awareness of the program objectives, and the participants in the self-study tend to renew their commitment to succeed in reaching them.

5.) The members of the program or service unit develop increased contact and communication, and as a result become a more cohesive body.

6.) An interest in research and experimentation at the program/service level is stimulated as members of the self-study group engage in introspection and goal refinement.

7.) Master planning is firmly based on the realities of the components of the college.

8.) As a result of self-study, participants are reminded of their interdependence with other programs and services at the college. This increased awareness contributes to the efficient functioning of the institution and to the enhancement of an identification with the institution as a whole rather than with a particular program or office.

9.) Additional relevant institutional and program/service level strategic research sites and issues are identified.

10.) The fact that the review process is program/service specific

forces members of the central administration to strengthen the integrative mechanisms at the institutional level, and to examine continually institutional philosophy, mission and goals.

11.) The fact that an accreditation recommendation is not made as a result of each review enables both internal and external examiners to conduct their work in an more objective and critical environment.

Disadvantages

1.) Program/service review is more costly both from a budgetary point of view and from the aspect of human resources needed to accomplish the annual reviews.

2.) Some would argue that constant self-study utilizes time that would otherwise be spent in activities directly related to the delivery of services.

At Hudson the advantages of Program/Service Review far outweigh the disadvantages. The new approach has become accepted and even welcomed by our faculty and staff. It was anticipated at the outset that some might find the process threatening and that an undesirable level of anxiety might prevail. Such was not the case. Most groups pursued their tasks openly and objectively, not attempting to protect the image or reputation of the unit nor directing the study unreasonably toward increased resource allocation.

Although the Office of the President and the governing board are not directy evaluated in the review cycle, they are indirectly involved in each self-study that is undertaken. It is intended that the Summary Assessment Team, comprised of the team chair and two other experienced evaluators, will examine

governance issues as part of their final assessment. In Hudson's system, the best indicator of the involvement of the Office of the President and the Board of Trustees is the President's annual response to the Planning Commission which is endorsed by the Board. Furthermore, both the President and the Board authorize the transmittal of the master plan to the college community and to the state and local sponsors. It is the master plan, a document literally written over the length of the review cycle and incorporating the recommendations of individual self-studies, which reflects the end product of Program/Service Review. It contains the mission statement, philosophical orientation and the detailed plans of the college for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSIONS

Hudson County Community College is now entering its tenth year since reorganization in 1977. The college started as a Commission because economic and philosophical conditions in Hudson County would not permit the establishment of a conventional college with a campus. The Commission arrangement was a way of gaining legitimacy through contracts with accredited institutions and providing much needed community college services in the county. It was surmised from the beginning, however, that the college would undergo a gradual transition. Movement from commission to contract college, to college without walls, to a traditional college with a campus was posted early on as the probable course the college would follow. Too many variables were present to predict a timeframe. At present the college could best be described as a combination of contract college and college without walls and, although we could stay where we are

indefinitely and continue to deliver quality services to our students, the likelihood is that evolution will continue.

It is within this frame of reference that the college began Program/Service Review and combined it with a comprehensive planning process designed to produce a master plan with strategic vision to guide our course. This is a plan which incorporates the self-analysis and evaluation of those involved in every academic program and service unit at the college. No institution needs a plan more than one in transition, and no institution has tried harder than Hudson to incorporate all of its people into the process.

Since 1977, approximately sixty external evaluators have come to Hudson to examine different aspects of the institution. All have found the innovative mode of delivery to be fascinating and overall their assessments have been quite positive. The college is certain that it has profited greatly from the identification of strengths and weaknesses by respected colleagues. In many cases their observations have initiated efforts designed to strengthen programs or have caused us to focus on neglected issues.

In sum, we feel that it is not possible to undergo the intensive evaluation we have without emerging stronger and wiser. Most of all we have learned that in the final analysis we should know our institution intimately, and realize that our own standards should be the highest of all.

APPENDIX A - ANNUAL SELF-STUDY TIMETABLE

Hudson County Community College
Self-Study Timetable
(1985-86)

Self-study committees formed.	Summer, 1985
Visit to campus by Dr. James A. Odom, Jr. (Chairperson of External Evaluation Team).	September 27, 1985
First draft of self-study document submitted to V.P. Oromaner and the Planning and Evaluation Committee.	November 18, 1985
Planning and Evaluation Committee meeting.	November 25, 1985
Drafts returned to self-study committees.	December 2, 1985
Final document submitted to V.P. Oromaner and Planning and Evaluation Committee	January 13, 1986
Self-study documents submitted to Dr. Odom and the External Evaluation Team.	February 3, 1986
Visit by External Evaluation Team.	March 2-4, 1986
Evaluation Team's report submitted to V.P. Oromaner and Planning and Evaluation Committee.	April 7, 1986
Meeting of V.P. Oromaner with each of the self-study committees.	April 8 & 9, 1986
Meeting of Planning and Evaluation Committee.	April 14, 1986
College's response to External Evaluation Team's report submitted to Dr. Odom.	April 21, 1986
Meeting of President Scott and V.P. Oromaner with each self-study committee.	April 22-25, 1986
Recommendations of Planning and Evaluation Committee submitted to Planning Commission.	May 5, 1986
Meeting of Planning Commission.	May 16, 1986
Recommendations of Planning Commission submitted to President Scott.	May 26, 1986

APPENDIX B - GUIDELINES FOR SELF-STUDY

hudson county community college
901 bergen avenue
jersey city, new jersey 07306

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Members of Self-Study Committees

FROM: Mark Oromaner, Vice President for Planning, Research and Evaluation

DATE: June 4, 1985

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Self-Study

The college's planning process calls for a self-study to be conducted for each of our academic programs and service areas. Each year a number of programs/service areas are selected for self-study. Those selected for the 1985/86 academic year are: Criminal Justice, Culinary Arts Institute, Financial Aid and Business Services, Management, Public Administration, and Secretarial Studies. Based on your association with one of these programs/services, you have been asked to join an appropriate self-study committee.

Attached are the guidelines for the completion of a self-study document. Since the same guidelines have been developed for academic programs and services areas, each committee will have to modify, eliminate and add specific questions. However, the committee should follow the order of the sections of the guidelines. These sections are general enough to be applicable to most self-studies.

Sally Cafasso (Research Assistant) will assist each committee in the collection and analysis of necessary data. I am also available for any questions or issues the committee may have. These self-studies will constitute the final round in our first cycle of program/services review. I wish you success with this important work.

GUIDELINES FOR SELF-STUDY

Background

The development of the program or area.
(Rationale for existence; when approved; description of modifications).

Philosophy, Goals and Objectives

What is the philosophy underlying this program or area?
What are the goals and objectives of the program or area?
(Be as specific as possible).
What is the relationship between the program's or area's philosophy, goals and objectives and those of the college?
Analysis
Problem Areas

Organization and Administration

What is the administrative and staff structure of this program or area?
(Organizational chart with names, titles, and number of individuals in each position).
What is the relationship between the administrative and staff structure of this program or area and that of the college?
Analysis
Problem Areas

Program Effectiveness

What measures are used to assess program or area effectiveness?
What input do those served by the program or area have in the assessment process?
What relationships exist between assessment of program effectiveness and modifications in the program?
(Are examples available?).
What relationships exist between program or area philosophy, goals and objectives, and outcome measurements?
How does this program or area compare in structure, content, and effectiveness with programs at comparable institutions?
Analysis
Problem Areas

Impact on Students

How are student needs reflected in the program, goals and objectives?
How are student needs assessed?
What mechanisms exist for the modification of the program to meet student needs?
What mechanisms exist for student input?
How does this program relate to recruitment practices?
What is the history of student enrollment in this program?
What are the student enrollment projections?
How is student success measured?
What mechanisms exist for the collection of data on students who leave the program?
What has been the retention rate?
How has this program contributed to student retention?
What mechanisms exist for alumni input?
Analysis
Problem Areas

Staff

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the staff associated with the program or area?
What has been the turnover of staff?
What are the qualifications of the staff?
What are the staff recruitment practices?
What mechanisms exist for input from staff?
Are present staff levels sufficient for the achievement of the goals and objectives?
What opportunities exist for staff development?
What staff have participated in these activities?
Analysis
Problem Areas

Resources and Institutional Support

What mechanisms exist for staff input into the development of program or area budget?
Are these mechanisms adequate?
Which sources of support, in addition to the college, has the program sought (Grants, Scholarships etc.)?

Are laboratories, equipment, library holdings, computer assisted instruction resources and other supports to the learning process adequate for present and projected enrollments?
Staff activities (conferences/seminars attended, publications, and other educational/professional contributions of individuals).
Analysis
Problem Areas

Advisory Committee

Does an advisory committee exist?
How frequently has the advisory committee met?
What is the composition of the advisory committee?
Is the present composition of the advisory committee adequate to provide necessary input?
Has the advisory committee contributed to the effectiveness of the program or area? If yes, how? (are examples available?).
Analysis
Problem Areas

Community Relations

What is this program's or area's impact upon the community served by HCCC?
What are this program's or area's relationships with the community served by HCCC?
How do these relationships contribute to the attainment of goals and objectives?
What are the benefits of these relationships to the community? To students? To the program? To the College?
What has been the impact of these relationships on recruitment? On placement?
What other avenues of service are being explored/developed?
What relationships exist with professional and academic communities beyond HCCC?
Analysis
Problem Areas

Program Cohesiveness

To what extent are staff members satisfied with available opportunities for input into the decision making process?
How does the chair/director/coordinator engage in activities to elevate cohesiveness?
Do members of the staff understand how their part of the program contributes to the whole?

How regularly do members of the staff meet to coordinate efforts?
How do members of the staff evaluate the responsiveness of the central administration to their individual and collective needs?
Are members of the staff aware of developments in other programs and areas at the college?
Analysis
Problem Areas

Conclusions

List those factors which the self-study committee believes represent the major strengths of the program.
List those factors which the self-study committee believes represent the major weaknesses of the program.
What impact has the self-study process had on this program or area?

Five Year Plan

Outline any plans which may result in changes in the program or area (structure, content, philosophy, objectives or goals).
Who will be responsible for implementing each change described above?
When will the change be implemented?
Will additional equipment, supplies etc. be necessary to implement each change? (Be specific).
Will additional personnel be necessary to implement each change? (Be specific).
Who will monitor progress toward implementation of these changes?
What is the projected impact of each change?--(on staff, students, recruitment, retention, placement, the program, the college, the community)?
How will the impact of the change be assessed?

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